

CONTINENCE PROMOTION/SURVEY IN NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND (NESB) CHINESE COMMUNITY IN SOUTH EAST SYDNEY

Aims of Study

This is a report on continence promotion activities within the NESB Chinese community of the region. It examined the severity of incontinence, the impact it had on individuals and the demand for a bilingual health professional to provide a service accessible for this disadvantaged section of the community.

Methods

Six health seminars were conducted by a cantonese speaking Chinese Continence nurse. A total of 117 attended which included community health workers, women's group and elderly groups. Each education took about 2 hours on bladder function, types of incontinence and treatment options then followed by the completion of a one page survey to identify the problem among participants. They were invited to leave contact details if a continence service specifically for NESB Chinese community would become available.

Results

There was good response from all groups as members were able to converse without any language difficulty. Other medical concerns were also expressed. 70% of the clientele of the Community Health workers (75% over 75 years old) and the women's groups reported incontinence, but only 30% were being treated. However, in the elderly Chinese groups only 37% had incontinence problem and also only 30% were seeking treatment. 57 people left their contact details for the Chinese Continence Service if it would be made available.

Conclusions

The stigma associated with incontinence, language barrier and limited formal education are the major factors that discourage the sufferers to seek help. An insidious problem is suspected among the elderly groups. The under reporting could be due to their reluctance in disclosure and or difficulty in understanding the survey questions. Those participants who left contact details are placed on a waiting list for assessment